Christian Charity: N°8

A

SERMON

Preach'd at *Great St. Maries,*

BEFORE THE

University of *Cambridge,*

Oct. 12. 1701.

By the Reverend and Honourable K

ROBERT LUMLEY LLOYD of *Cheam,*

Now *Senior* Fellow of *Pembroke-Hall,* and Chaplain to the Right Hon. *Richard* Earl of *Scarborough.*

Extendit ergo (Christus) in Passione manus suas, orbemque dimensus est, ut jam tunc ostenderet, ab ortu Solis usque ad occasum, magnum populum ex omnibus linguis & tribubus congregatum, sub alas suas esse venturum. Lactantius, Edit. Oxon. 395.

LONDON:

Printed by *E. P.* for *R. Wilkin,* at the *King's-Head* in St. *Paul's* Churchyard, M DCC V.

Heb. xii. 14.

Follow Peace with all Men.

WHEN we duly consider this, and such like places of the Holy Scripture, and but slightly reflect on the common Practice now in Vogue amongst us, we shall be forced to make one of these ungrateful Conclusions, either that what I have read unto you is no part of our Christian Profession, or that there are but very few sincere Professors of Christianity; for the general Temper of Mankind is directly contrary to this express and determinate Law for Peace. 'Tis not a bold assuming to our selves of splendid Titles and gay Characters that can any-ways in the least entitle us to an Humour or Disposition agreeable thereunto, for very often most Holy Father hath been the Stile of a Devil Incarnate; most Christian, of one who in all his Actions hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel, whose whole Life hath been one continu'd Series of Royal Perjury, who instead of *following Peace with all Men* makes War with all, ruining Cities, depopulating Kingdoms, turning fruitful Lands into Fields of Blood, and strowing them with Dead-Mens Bones, expecting thence to reap an Harvest of Honour. The Prophets of old (*Isai.* 2. 4. and *Mic.* 4. 3.) could fore-

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tel us that *a time ſhould come when Men ſhould beat their Swords into Plow-ſhares and their Spears into Pruning-hooks, when Nation ſhould not lift up ſword againſt Nation, neither ſhould they learn War any more*: which mighty Bleſſing is moſt juſtly apply'd to the Sun-ſhine-days of the Goſpel; and tho' in the calm Reign of *Auguſtus Cæſar*, when the Face of the whole Earth greatly rejoic'd and ſmil'd through the Bleſſings of an Univerſal Peace, occaſion'd by the mighty Influence of the then New-born Prince of Peace; though I ſay then theſe Prophecies ſeem'd happily to be accompliſh'd; yet thoſe Halcyon Days, thoſe Times of Proſperity were ſoon at an end, and more bloody Storms and Tempeſts, Wars and Rumours of Wars have ſince diſturb'd and ſhock'd the World than ever did aforetime; as if Deſtruction, Deſolation, Mourning and Woe were to be introduc'd among the Sons of Men by the Prince of Peace; as if he came, in a literal Senſe and by direct Conſequence, not *to ſend Peace on the Earth but a Sword*; which indeed by the fatal unhappy Event hath been ſeemingly verified (though nothing leſs was the prime Intent and End of his coming) by his introducing and eſtabliſhing an Heavenly and Divine Religion, in all its Parts pure and free from the groſs Conceits of ſenſual Inventions, and intolerable Barbarity of the Idolatrous and Superſtitious Heathen World, which hath occaſion'd by its Native Excellency (unhappily occaſion'd) ſo much inveterate Malice and Oppoſition, ſo many direful Perſecutions.

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These so many unnatural Events, give no small Offence to the hard-hearted unbelieving Jew, are no small Prejudice to his Conversion, so that he still persists to hope for the coming of his *Messias*, because we Christians suffer not these Prophesies of Peace to be fulfilled (practically fulfilled) in our Days.

Now to vindicate the Purity of the Gospel from the Malice and Blasphemy, Prejudice and Ill-will, which upon this sole Account, as well Jews as Heathens conceive against it, we are to understand, that these Prophesies are not absolute, but conditional: not that there should be, strictly speaking, a general Cessation of Arms, an universal everlasting Peace throughout the whole World; for this would be to suppose all the Inhabitants of it at once truly Christian, notwithstanding we are told by St. *John* (1 Ep. 5. 19.) *that the World lieth in Wickedness*; and so long as Envy, Pride, Lust, and Tyranny reign within our Hearts, Discontents and Jealousies, Wars and Fightings will be the continued Plague of this World; but the Doctrine of Jesus Christ is of such known prevailing Excellency, that whersoever it is heartily profess'd and sincerely embrac'd, there is a sudden and happy Change produc'd among Men, which not only strictly prohibits the most distant Causes of Strife (those prolifick Seeds of Dissention) such as Anger, Malice, Revenge, ambitious Desires of ruling Equals, and the rest of that hellish Catalogue of Lusts and Vices, which wickedly domineer in the

unruly paſſionate Breaſt of the Sinful Man, and burſting thence, ſet the World on fire: This peaceable Doctrine does not only poſitively forbid all theſe Occaſions of Wars, theſe Embrio's of Diſſention; but alſo with a moſt indiſpenſable Duty enjoins Meekneſs, Patience, Gentleneſs, Love and Beneficence, not only to our darling Friends, and other generous Perſons, but alſo to our implacable inveterate Foes, our unreaſonable Enemies; are they hungry? we muſt feed them; are they thirſty? we muſt give them drink; are they naked? we muſt cloath them; are they in Danger of any kind? we muſt uſe all lawful means to aſſiſt them, and help them out with a ſincere, fervent, Chriſtian Zeal: and if ſuch Divine Coals of Fire fetch'd from Heaven and heap'd on our Enemy's head melt him not, diſſolve him not into ſtreams of anſwerable Love and Kindneſs, his Nature is deprav'd to malicious Wickedneſs, his Temper is Diabolical, if we may with Charity ſuppoſe ſuch a Monſter can exiſt among the Sons of *Adam*. This is the moſt Chriſtian and moſt effectual means to vanquiſh our bittereſt Enemies, to ſoften the hardeſt Hearts; this indeed will melt Swords into Plowſhares, and Spears into Pruning-hooks, and happily transform thoſe terrible Engines of War and Deſtruction, into the more uſeful Inſtruments of Peace and Proſperity.

All other Religions have been not only the accidental Occaſions, but the immediate and proper Cauſes

Cauſes of Wars and Blood-ſhed; not only approving of Revenge and Retaliation of Injuries, but propagating and maintaining them by Arms and Violence; delivering their Principles with the harſh and diſmal Sound of Drums and Trumpets, and writing them in Mens Hearts with the point of their Sword: but this *Wiſdom from above*, which is as well pure as peaceable, as it ſtands in need of no ſuch helliſh Methods of Propagation, ſo it always condemns the Uſe of them; a divine Conſtancy, ſublime Charity, Patience and Perſeverance, Prayers and Tears, thoſe never-failing Weapons of a Chriſtian, were the only Inſtruments uſed at its firſt planting and propagation, when it took root and proſper'd (like a Tree planted by a River ſide) and became the ſpreading Joy of the whole Earth, as is evident beyond the ſtupid Impudence of Scepticiſm itſelf, as well from the Principles and Doctrine, as from the Practice of the great Author and Founder of it, the Prince of Peace; who hath made ſo full, clear, and illuſtrious Diſcovery of the moſt appoſite means, the moſt ready way to attain and enjoy both Temporal and Eternal Peace; (the Peace of this World, as well as that of a better) that nothing is deficient, nothing can be wanting to confirm a ſettled, quiet, happy Peace here, and aſſure us of an everlaſting Peace hereafter; but only a becoming and dutiful Entertainment of his Holy Goſpel; which is ſo excellent, ſo very deſirable in its own Nature, ſo compleatly perfective of Ours, that

to reaſonable Creatures nothing can be wanting to perſuade them to a zealous and conſtant Practice of it, but the bare knowledge of its juſt and equitable Precepts: Moreover great and mighty Promiſes encourage and invite us on the one hand to receive and entertain it; on the other, terrible Threats and as certain Puniſhments will inevitably ſeize us, if we deſpiſe and caſt it behind our backs; ſo that we muſt at once diſclaim our ador'd Intereſt, renounce our Obedience, and forfeit all Pretence to Reaſon, if we perſiſt ſtubbornly to reject ſuch an advantagious Offer of Mercy; and upon ſuch inflexible Minds what can prevail? ſo as to bring them to a Chriſtian peaceable Temper and Diſpoſition, but God's Omnipotent Arm and Irreſiſtible Power? which He forbears to exert in the Converſion of Sinners (but in the Puniſhment of them moſt aſſuredly will) as being inconſiſtent with his Wiſdom and Juſtice, with his promis'd Rewards, and threaten'd Puniſhments, deſtroying the very Foundation of all Religion, making it not the Office and Duty of Man, but the ſole Act of God, the immediate Effect of his Almighty Power, without any the leaſt Concurrence of our free Choice, of our Rational Conſent. God 'tis true *works in us both to will and to do according to his good pleaſure*, and all our Sufficiency is from him, for we can do nothing of our ſelves, but we muſt co-operate with his Grace, and work too with Fear and Trembling, if we hope to be ſav'd. The Holy Prophets then have foretold what

what Spirit and Temper Men ought to be of, who will be true and genuine Profeſſors of Chriſtianity; which Divine Doctrine of the Goſpel mightily grew and prevailed in the Primitive days of the Church, when Jews and Gentiles, thoſe inveterate Enemies, were reconcil'd, both oblig'd to the ſame Laws and Injunctions, the ſame Duties incumbent on both, both made Fellow-Citizens, Heirs of the ſame Hope of Salvation; that ſeemingly irreconcileable Hatred, that Partition-wall being thrown down, all who hope and expect to be ſaved muſt *follow Peace with all men*, not only with thoſe who are of an happy, calm, peaceable Temper, for the Publicans themſelves have advanced hitherto, but alſo with thoſe turbulent Sons of Thunder, who ſeem to be born for no other end or purpoſe but to ruffle the World, and render the Sufferings of the meek and patient Man more conſpicuous, more illuſtrious.

Firſt then, We who call our ſelves Chriſtians are eternally oblig'd, by the very Foundation of our Holy Profeſſion, *to follow Peace with all men*, to the utter Excluſion even of the very Seeds of Hatred, Malice, Diſcord and Envy, and the reſt of that Antichriſtian Crew out of our Hearts.

I. Our *Firſt* Enquiry then muſt be into the Nature of this Divine Peace in general.

II. *Secondly*, We ſhall diſcourſe of the ſeveral Degrees and Sorts of it in particular, And

III. and *Laſtly*, Propoſe Arguments to engage us in the

the Study, and invite us to the Practice of it; by which I hope it will plainly appear that we ſhall neither miſpend our Time, nor miſs of an agreeable Reward.

Firſt then, in the moſt general and extenſive Notion we have of Peace, we may deſcribe it to be an intimate Union of Hearts and Minds, an agreeable Concurrence of Affections, ſuch as will gently rule and guide all the Actions of Men in the particular Circumſtances of Life, and direct them by its prevailing Influence to perform all ſorts of Kindneſſes, all degrees of Good-Will and Charity, that is, *to do unto all men as they themſelves could honeſtly expect and deſire to be done unto by others*, (themſelves ſuppoſed in the ſame Circumſtances, in the ſame Condition.) And this Golden Rule bears an equal reſpect both to the Concerns and Affairs of this Life, as we are Members of the ſame Community; and to Religious Duties, as we are conſtituent Parts of the Holy Catholick Church; the one may be properly ſtiled a Political or Civil Peace, as it may have reſpect to the Goods of Fortune, or Worldly Enjoyments; the other a Religious Peace, in oppoſition to Schiſms and Hereſies, and both alike are here underſtood, both alike commanded.

As to the *firſt*, namely a Civil Peace, we have it very frequently enjoin'd us, for the Apoſtle tells us (*Rom.* 12. 18.) *If it be poſſible, as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men*; which undoubtedly refers to a Politick and Civil Peace; becauſe the Command is

univerſal and without reſerve; whereas all men, we know, have not Faith, and conſequently that their unſpeakable Misfortune can give no colour of pretence to juſtifie them who have, in not loving them as Men, and bearing the ſame common ſtamp of Humanity. And this Peace here enjoin'd, either concerns Perſons, ſuch as Neighbours and Relations; then Malice, Revenge, Envy, Strife and Brawlings, and ſuch like, are chiefly forbid; or it may extend it ſelf to the more publick Concerns of a whole Nation or Kingdom, and then Murmurings, Factions, Rebellions are chiefly aim'd at. Or laſtly, divers Kingdoms, States or Commonwealths, and then 'tis oppos'd to open and profeſs'd War, and all Acts of Hoſtility. And theſe ſeveral Sorts of Peace, according to the degrees of their Perfection, conſiſt either in an outward Quiet and Tranquillity, wherein every one enjoys his Property, whatſoever by any ſort of Right, he can juſtly call his own, whether by Inheritance, or by Courſe or Turn, without Diſturbance, without the trouble of vindicating his Right againſt the unreaſonable pretences of unjuſt Intruders; or elſe in the inward Affections of our Hearts, when uprightly and honeſtly we love one another, without any baſe Ends or ſiniſter Deſigns, and this is the bleſſed ſort of Peace more chiefly aim'd at in the Words I have read unto you.

As to the publick Peace of Kingdoms and Nations, their Kings, Princes and Governours have and ought to have a more proper, immediate and ſpecial Care

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of it; in whoſe Breaſts alone are laid up the Reſolutions and Determinations for Peace or War, whenſoever provok'd by the Injuries of their encroaching Neighbours. And for the Peace of particular Kingdoms and States, the Supream Power of each is engaged to preſerve and maintain it, as their ſeveral Conſtitutions direct, by an impartial Adminiſtration of Juſtice; thus ſeditious Practices are quaſh'd, and even Rebellion it ſelf bridled, and whatſoever is of pernicious conſequence to the Community we live in, is aw'd into Peace by a reſolute impartial Governour, who is a happy Terror to Evil Doers.

But that which chiefly concerns us, the private Peace of particular Perſons is a Duty incumbent on all Men, and if embrac'd and practis'd, as the Excellency of its Nature requires it ſhould, the Univerſal Peace of the whole World, of Nations, of Kingdoms, will be mightily advanc'd by its kindly and benign Influence; for if every particular did his Duty, there could certainly be nothing amiſs in the whole, if every String were exactly in Tune, we might be ſure of Divine Harmony.

Follow Peace with all Men: From which Words we are enjoin'd chiefly theſe following particulars.

Firſt, A tractable and eaſie Diſpoſition of Mind, in oppoſition to the ſtiff and haughty Churl, a mild and gentle Behaviour, that diſtinguiſhing Mark of a Chriſtian, which in the Eyes of God, as well as Men, is of ineſtimable Value, that fundamental Preſerva-

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tive of this World's Peace, that neceſſary Preparative to Eternal Peace in the next; the latent Seeds of Virtue and Vice reſide in the inward Receſſes and Temper of the Soul; our deliberate Purpoſes and Deſigns our propenſe Wills and Affections tincture all our Actions with Good or Evil, on which depends the great Concern of Happineſs or Miſery, therefore Sins of invincible Ignorance, or unavoidable Infirmity, or ſudden Surprizal whereunto the full and free Conſent of the Will does not concur, are amongſt all others the moſt excuſeable, moſt deſerving pardon both of Humane and Divine Laws. The Goſpel of Chriſt eſteems of Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart, as humane Laws do of the external and more groſs Act, for *he who barely looks after a Woman to luſt after her, hath committed Adultery already with her in his heart*, and he ſhews the Licentiouſneſs of his Will, tho' his Power be reſtrained: *he who hates his Brother is a Murtherer*, who covets his Goods is a Thief; for we are commanded not only to cleanſe the Outſide of the Veſſel, but to waſh clean the Inſide eſpecially, otherwiſe we ſhall be number'd with the Hypocrites againſt whom our great Maſter hath pronounced a Woe, who *outwardly appear'd Righteous unto Men, but within were full of Hypocriſie and Iniquity*; thoſe Diſeaſes which have unhappily taken up the moſt recluſe parts of the Body being out of the reach as well of the Phyſician's Eye as his Preſcriptions are very deſperate or incurable, and the Sins which lie lurking in

the dark Retirements of the Heart, are like Poiſon in the very Vitals, of all others the moſt pernicious, the moſt unavoidably fatal.

The Perpetration of groſs Sins may be accidentally hindred, many rubs and obſtacles offering themſelves in the way, our Power may not anſwer our Wills, the Dread of diſcovery, and being detected may baulk and reſtrain our Inclinations how vitious ſoever; for that deform'd Monſter Vice (howſoever rampant and bold in this degenerate Age) hath not yet dar'd to appear bare-fac'd, and without a Diſguiſe; Company may prevent us, Diſgrace and Scorn from good Men may check and deter us, the place may be inconvenient, or our Strength and Vigour deſert us; but which of all theſe can prevent the Operations of the Heart, which are vigorouſly exerted in every Thought, in every Purpoſe; all Times and Seaſons, all Places, Companies and Ages are a like convenient, are alike able if the treacherous Heart conſent; the Body 'tis true is engaged only in the outward and meaneſt Offices, in the Drudgery and Vaſſallage of Sin, and may be wearied out, ſpent, decline and languiſh under the heavy and unhappy burthen, yet the Soul may continue vivid, quick, and full of Vigour, pleaſing and delighting itſelf in the very Invention of Vice, and ruminating on Wickedneſs, acting over in the Fanſie and Imagination all the Vanities, Follies, and Impieties lately conceiv'd

ceived in that fruitful and teeming Soil; and thoſe are very eaſie and quick of diſpatch, not ſo much as requiring the Labour of the Body, and but very little Study or Attention of the Mind itſelf, which when once corrupt, is too too prone to all manner of Iniquities, and wicked Imaginations.

All moral Probity, Goodneſs and Honeſty (as well as the more excellent Qualities of a Chriſtian) hath a near Affinity with, a cloſe Dependance on the Temper and Diſpoſition of the Mind, Will and Affections: a ſowre Core, a root of Bitterneſs, a reſerve or ſecret Deſign of Miſchief or Unkindneſs upon any occaſion, and hopes of Impunity is repugnant even to the upright Laws of Nature and Reaſon, and altogether unagreeable with the Divine Rules of our Holy Profeſſion; this is the principal Part of our Duty, a calm and quiet Humour, a peaceable Diſpoſition of Mind towards all Men; a reſolute and firm Adheſion to this ſublime Virtue, ought to take up our whole Studies, to be our chief Aim, our conſtant Care not only for our own Advantages and Profit (as out of Neceſſity) but we ought ſincerely to embrace this compleat Virtue for its own Excellency in itſelf ſo amiable. And where this ſerene and quiet Temper prevails, all that are Enemies to Peace will be diſcouraged, muſt give place, will be aſham'd of their Sins and forſake them; the chief of which is Self love, which makes it own Dear-ſelf (for its can be ſo to

no mortal elſe) the centre of all its Actions, the ſole end of all its brutiſh Deſigns: Ambition, Tyranny, Malice, Injuſtice Cruelty, are the conſtant though accurſed Companions of that deteſtable Monſter, it boggles at nothing which ſtands in the way of its own baſe Gain and Advantage, driving on furiouſly, (*Jehu* like) inſolently, and with an high hand, to its beloved Goal of Vain-glory; from which barbarous Proceedings, unleſs Humane Reaſon be ſunk into Inſenſibility, all generous Senſe of Honour, all manly Courage, all Chriſtian Liberty be at once become degenerate, *Diſſentions muſt come, but wo unto him by whom they do come.* But on the other ſide, when we have our Minds poſſeſſed with, and wholly given up to Charity, Forbearance, Humility, Modeſty which always have and ever will prove themſelves the only indiſſoluble Chain of Vertues, able and ſufficient to unite Mens Minds in the everlaſting Bond of Peace; for where (I ſay) ſuch Graces keep their Reſidence there can be no Offence given, none received, no Revenge ſought for, nothing even for the croſs-look'd Eye of Malice to ſquint at; hence we have the Apoſtle's Command, *Rom.* 12. 16. *to be of the ſame mind one towards another, not to mind high things, but to condeſcend to men of low eſtate.* How much more ſeverely then would he cenſure thoſe, who muſt needs be domineering and tyrannizing over their Equals, where there can be no need of Condeſcenſion, becauſe of the ſame Degree, State, and Condition in the World with their pretended Excellences. And again, as if his

his former Advice were not full enough (*Phil.* 2. 3.) he commands *that nothing be done through Strife or Vain-glory, but in Lowlineſs of Mind, let each eſteem other better than themſelves*; whereas the Reverſe of this Apoſtolical Rule is, in general practice amongſt us, in the naughtineſs and Pride of our Hearts to eſteem our ſelves better than others. The contempt of which Command of St. *Paul* is the principal foundation of all Diſcord, Diſturbances and Diſſentions amongſt us; *from whence*, ſays St. *James* 4. 1. *come Wars and Fightings amongſt you, come they not from hence, even from your Luſts warring in your Members.* Wars and Fightings, all manner of Controverſies whatſoever, ſuch as are managed by the Tongue and Pen, as well as thoſe that are carrried on by the Hand and the Sword, all religious and eccleſiaſtical, as well as State and ſecular Diſſentions, Schiſms in the Church as well as Diviſions in Kingdoms, publick War between Prince and Prince, as well as private Malice, Envy, Revenge, betwixt Man and Man are all of the ſame curſed Off-ſpring, all of the ſame deteſtable Lineage, and moſt worthily reckon'd by St. *Paul* among the *Works of the Fleſh*, *Gal.* 5. 19. And as Self-Love, ſo groundleſs Suſpicion and Cenſure is a ſecond grand Diſturber of the Peace of the World; for it will hear with Delight, and eaſily credit Detractions and Calumnies, and then propagate them as far as ſpiteful loud-mouth'd Fame can carry them, taking every thing by the worſt handle, which will alſo of neceſſity alienate and exaſperate

the Minds of Men, whereas true Chriſtian Charity *thinks* no Evil, 1 *Cor.* 13. 5. much leſs credits or ſpeaks any again.

Again, as a gentle and peaceable Diſpoſition of Mind is here chiefly required: ſo our conſtant Demeanour, our whole Courſe of Life muſt tend directly to the ſame centre of Peace: Injuſtice, Wrong, or Oppreſſion muſt be ſo far removed from our Minds, ſo deteſtable to our very Natures, ſo far from affecting our Neighbours, that on the other ſide, he who deſigns to live up to the ſublime height of generous Chriſtianity, muſt ſhare an equal Delight, Satisfaction, and Pleaſure with his fortunate and happy Neighbour, in all his Happineſs, in all his good Fortune: 'Tis of common Obſervation, that the ſtubborn hardneſs even of a Flint itſelf is eaſily ſubdued and divided into pieces, if encountered on a ſoft ground, when on an Anvil it ſturdily reſiſts Violence and Force; ſo a ſoft and gentle Carriage will have greater Influence on the Stiffneſs of other Mens Minds, than roughneſs and anger can ever pretend to. We muſt alſo readily bear with the Weakneſs and Infirmities of our Neighbours, which muſt at one time or other be expected ſo long as we inhabit theſe Earthly Tabernacles, we muſt alſo look upon them, not with an envious and malicious Eye, but eſteem them as Slips and Frailties incident to Humane Nature, from which few or rather none are totally exempted;

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Be ſure not to aggravate them into hideous Crimes, and unpardonable Provocations, conſidering that according to the common Rules of Equity, it may well be expected that we ſhould forgive our fellow Creature ſome few Talents, (a ſmall Debt) who ſtand in need daily to be forgiven by our Heavenly Father, greater, far greater Sums, incomparably greater Treſpaſſes; and to theſe our good Deeds, we muſt make an Addition of ſoft and gentle Words (the cheapeſt Ingredient of any Compoſition, which coſt nothing, tho of great Value) and through the prevailing Charms of an hearty agreeable kind Deportment, win the good-will and Affections of all Mankind, according to the excellent Advice of the Wiſe Man (*Prov.* 15. 1.) *A ſoft anſwer turneth away wrath, but grievous words ſtir up anger*; theſe three Particulars then, namely a peaceable and meek Spirit, obliging and courteous Actions, ſoft Speeches and Anſwers are the only Ways and Methods to follow after and obtain Peace if not with all Men, yet certainly with moſt, with all good Men, and in our own Conſciences, which is the moſt valuable Peace of all. But yet the Peace enjoin'd in the Text is a mutual relative Peace, and not in every ſingle Man's Power, not in the reach of every Individual; the Duty cannot be compleatly performed without common Conſent: all that is enjoin'd us is to be aſſiſting towards this bleſſed Work with the beſt of our Endeavours, with the utmoſt Faculty

ty both of Soul and Body. There often happen ſeveral Obſtacles which altogether prevent the deſired Progreſs of this amiable Virtue, which entirely excuſes us, and preſerves us Innocent: Religion, Juſtice, Honeſty do often prove Obſtructions; for it may be ſome one will be ſo unreaſonable as to demand a Renunciation of our Faith, of our Religion, the Denial it may be even of God himſelf, in exchange (forſooth) of his valuable Friendſhip, and what is this but as the Orator expreſſes it *Obedientia fracti & abjecti animi arbitrio carentis ſuo*, a deteſtable Slavery exceeding even that of the Gallies. But no Man I hope can be perſuaded to believe that he ought to do this, for we muſt *follow Holineſs* as well as Peace; and that our Bleſſed Saviour tells us in the firſt place, *Seek ye firſt the Kingdom of Heaven.*

Our own proper juſt Intereſt and Preſervation may alſo honeſtly prevent it; no one is obliged to harbour an angry Viper in his Boſom, when he hath his Sting in him, ready to put in execution his fatal Deſigns; all that our Holy Profeſſion obliges us to, all that the ſtricteſt Rules of Chriſtianity require at our hands, is to be charitably diſpoſed, and readily prepared to embrace Peace when ſo great a Bleſſing may be had upon Rational and Chriſtian Grounds, thus ſhall we ſafely avoid all Blame, Sin ſhall never be imputed to us.

And when we are ſo happy as to be at peace with others, we muſt make it our chief care never to make a Breach our ſelves, nor give them a juſt occaſion ſo

to

to do, if a Miſcarriage happens on our ſide we muſt be ready to be reconciled as ſoon as may be, by declaring the Integrity of our Intentions, and excuſing our ſelves as far from any ill Deſigns as may be, or otherwiſe by asking Pardon, confeſſing the Fault, and making amends and Reparations for the Injury done to, and ſuſtain'd by our Neighbour. If our Neighbour offend, upon his Acknowledgment and reaſonable Satisfaction, we are bound meekly to forgive him, without retaining Anger and Malice or the leaſt thoughts of a future Revenge, when opportunity and occaſion ſhall offer. This I think is the full of what is requir'd by this Command *Follow Peace with all Men.*

The Motives and Inducements which urge us to it are many and powerful, I ſhall mention ſome;

Firſt, There is a natural Equity in it.

Secondly, There are expreſs and poſitive Commands for it.

Thirdly, 'Tis our own proper Intereſt and Advantage. And if Reaſon, Religion and Self-preſervation cannot influence and prevail, then nothing can.

I begin firſt with the natural Equity of it, for we are all Brethren, deſcended from the ſame original Parents (*Acts* 17. 26.) *He hath made of one blood all Nations of Men, from Adam firſt and afterwards from Noah*: but beſides the Endearment of the ſame Original, the very Frame and Conſtitution of our Nature requires it, for Man is a ſociable Creature, and were it not for the mighty Advantages of Mutual Helps and Aſſiſtances (the diſtinguiſhing Prerogative of Unity and

Society) Man of all other Creatures would have little Reaſon to boaſt and pride himſelf in his glorious Pre-eminence above the reſt of the Works of Gods Hands; Man therefore was not made for Hatred and Diſcord, nor did it ſeem good to the Divine Wiſdom to furniſh Mankind with Native Arms, as it hath done other Creatures, who live upon Prey, Deſtruction and Rapine: but now Man out of the abundance of his vain Wiſdom hath arm'd himſelf in defiance of Heaven, as if he could contrive for himſelf better than God had done for him; thus from a reaſonable and benign Nature, he is degenerated into a degree of Cruelty, exceeding even the moſt Savage Fierceneſs of Wolves, of Tygers, for they ſeldom or never aſſail or injure thoſe of their own Kind, they never fight for covetous ambitious or revengeful Ends, but for great and juſt Cauſes, for the Defence and Preſervation of their Lives and Liberties, for their Mates, for their young Ones; neither do they wage War in Troops and Companies, in Squadrons, in Armies, but for the moſt part in ſingle Combats, which are but ſhort, and ſoon over, and then ends all their Anger, Spleen, and Fury.

But Mans Hoſtility is chiefly practis'd upon his own Kind, upon Man his own Brother, and that too not only upon empty, vain, frivolous Accounts, but too too often upon unreaſonable unjuſt and wicked Grounds: and what is of moſt diſmal Conſequence his Battles are not Single and Perſonal, but involve whole Nations in Confuſion, Deſolation and Miſery; deluging

deluging a Land with Parents Blood and Orphans Tears, moſt of which it may be were not ſo much as acquainted with the Cauſe of the Quarrel, which they ſo unhappily ſo unreaſonably engage in: theſe Wars too are long and laſting rarely ending but with the Life and Deſtruction of one of the Parties, nay they are often-times handed down to Poſterity, and Heirs inherit their Anceſtors Quarrels, as well as their Kingdoms and Eſtates, tho I know nothing in this World ſo likely, which by ſuch natural Conſequence, will ſo certainly, ſo ſpeedily put an end to both the one and the other, as well their Lives, as Eſtates. And tho ſome may eſcape with Life yet when they can no longer hurt or do any conſiderable Miſchief, when their Quarrels have prov'd themſelves ſufficiently pernicious, when the Power of Offenſive Arms is taken from them by the unfortunate Succeſs of a long and doubtful War, what Heart-burnings, Envy, Hatred, and Malice ſtill continue? theſe deteſtable Outrages are directly contrary to the Laws of God and Nature, to true Piety, and Chriſtian Religion, becauſe they over-throw the very Foundations of Humane Society, and that Mutual Love and Peace which alone can cheriſh it. They deſpoil God of his Honour, by defacing his Image, by deſtroying ſo many lively Stamps of his Divine Majeſty, by ſacrificing ſo much Humane Blood to Devils, to Envy, Revenge, and Malice that curſed Legion. And as if this were not enough they eraſe the very Characters of Humanity, and in its place ſet up a ſort of Canibals terrible even to themſelves, abhorr'd by all Fleſh, diſown'd by Nature as aſham'd of their Production.

Secondly, There are expreſs and poſitive Commands, which ſtrictly oblige us as well *to follow Peace with all Men*, as diligently to avoid all Occaſions of Strife and Diſſention; *have Peace one with another*, ſays St. *Mark* (9. 50.) *Live peaceably with all Men*, ſays St. *Paul* (*Rom.* 12. 18.) *let nothing be done through Strife*, (*Phil.* 2. 3.) *Where Envy and Strife is, there is Confuſion and every evil Work*, ſays St. *James* (3. 16.) *Diſcords and Diſſentions* are reckoned among the *Deeds of the Fleſh* (Gal. 5. 20.) *Hatred*, *Strife*, *and Variance* are numbred with *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *and Hereſie*, and if we know nothing of their Natures, if we were ſo happy as to be Strangers to them, we may gueſs what they are by their Companions; but the wonder is ſtill the *greater* to find ſuch Practices among thoſe who own the name of Chriſt, *than* among the barbarous and ſuperſtitious Heathens and Pagans: for *thoſe who are of the ſame Myſtical Body*, *united under the ſame Spiritual Head* (and that Head is Chriſt the *Prince of Peace*) *and ſo Members one of another*, for thoſe I ſay not only to diſſent and differ, to quit all ſenſe of true Generoſity, Tenderneſs, and Compaſſion, but to exerciſe mutual Hoſtility with implacable and malicious Hatred, to plunge our ſelves over Head and Ears in Blood and Cruelty, to rend and tear one another in pieces: what is this but for harmleſs Doves to aſſume the Nature of rapacious and devouring Hawks and Vultures, to carry Banners ſtain'd with Blood inſtead of Olive-Branches, for Lambs to turn Wolves and Tygers, to exchange their native Meekneſs and gentle

gentle Temper for inhoſpitable Savageneſs and brutiſh Fierceneſs, nothing can be more contradictory and prejudicial to Chriſt's Religion, whoſe bleſſed Author delights to make himſelf known to his faithful Followers, rather by Titles of Mercy and Goodneſs, Love and Beneficence, than by the Terrors of his Juſtice, or Majeſty of his Power. Whoſe Goſpel is a Doctrine of Peace not of Diſſention; which when firſt proclaim'd by the Heavenly Meſſenger, its very Prologue and Introduction was *Peace on Earth, Good-will towards Men.* Whoſe Diſciples are or ſhould be Children of Peace, not booted Apoſtles, not Men of War; whoſe Foundation, is Reconciliation and Peace made between God and Man, by Chriſt's ſhedding indeed his own not anothers Blood; whoſe Precepts every where enjoin Love and Unity, and whoſe whole End and Deſign is to bring us to everlaſting Peace and Bleſſedneſs hereafter. How they can imagine I know not, that the ſame Heaven ſhould be the happy Manſion of Peace to them hereafter who can't here co-habit in Unity and Friendſhip; Religion therefore as well as Natural Reaſon ſtrictly requires us *to follow Peace with all Men,* and if neither of theſe more noble Motives can prevail, yet methinks this Conſideration ſhould, which generally ſpeaking hath a very prevailing Influence on the ſordid and baſe Minds of Men, namely their own Temporal Intereſt and Advantage; for they cannot long ſubſiſt without it in this World with any tolerable Eaſe or Comfort of Life, for a Kingdom divided againſt

itſelf;

itſelf cannot ſtand, *if ye bite and devour one* [illegible] *take heed that ye be not conſum'd one of another*, this *Paul's* Advice to the *Galatians* (5. 15.) All the [illegible] fortable Enjoyments of this Life, all the Eaſe, [illegible] our innocent Diverſions depend wholly upon [illegible] great Bleſſing of Peace and Quietneſs, without which Life itſelf is but a burthen: unleſs with *Pliny's* Sa[illegible] mander we can live upon Fire and Delight in Flames, and he who hath brought himſelf to this paſs, ſeems to be well accompliſh'd for what (with all Reaſon) he ought to expect in the World to come, even *to dwell in everlaſting Burnings*: which the Royal Prophet intimates (by way of Queſtion) that moſt aſſuredly no Man can.

Beſides by *following Peace with all Men*, a multitude of Sins and Inconveniences are hereby prevented and avoided, and conſequently the Puniſhment of them in the World to come as well as the Uneaſineſs and Vexation of them in this. This is the only way to obtain God's Favour and Bleſſing who is call'd the *God of Peace* by St. *Paul* (1 *Cor.* 14. 33.) as our Bleſſed Saviour is ſtiled the *Prince of Peace* by the Royal Prophet (*Iſa.* 9. 6.) who hath by his Holy Evangeliſt St. *Matt.* (5. 9.) pronounced the *Peace-makers bleſſed, if being call'd the Children of God* can make them ſo; they are bleſſed here and ſhall be happy hereafter, *for they ſhall ſee God*, ſhall enjoy that Bleſſed Viſion in the peaceful Regions of Everlaſting Life.

Now to God the Father, God the Son and God [illegible] *aſcrib'd as is moſt due all Honour*, &c.

FINIS.

ERRATA. Page. 9. l. 7. r. *particular or private Perſons*, p. 17. l. 3. [illegible]